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ABSTRACT

This article reports an empirical research study into the relationship between second language learners' target language proficiency/task type and their ability to transmit comprehensible messages to their listeners. In order to test the assumption that even low-level English learners can transmit comprehensible messages despite their limited linguistic resources by using communication strategies (CSs), a sample of 30 Arab English majors at Yarmouk University in Jordan were asked to perform three tasks: picture story telling, object identification, and role play. The performance of subjects was transcribed and analyzed. Results indicate that transmission of comprehensible messages varies according to the learner's proficiency level and the task type. These findings lend further support to the hypothesis that even low level English proficiency learners can communicate and pass comprehensible messages to the interlocutor by resorting to CSs, despite the linguistic errors committed. (Contains 12 bibliographic references.) (Author/SM)

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Message Transmission and Comprehension of Arab Learners of English in Jordan

ED 472 700

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Message Transmission and Comprehension of Arab Learners of English in Jordan

Abstract

This article reports an empirical research into the relationship between L2 learners' target language proficiency/task type and their ability to transmit comprehensible messages to their listeners. In order to test the assumption that even low-level English learners can transmit comprehensible messages despite their limited linguistic resources by using communication strategies (henceforth CSs), a sample of 30 Arab English majors at Yarmouk University in Jordan were asked to perform 3 CLT tasks: Picture story telling, Object-identification and Role-play.

The performance of the subjects was transcribed and analysed. The results indicate that transmission of comprehensible messages varies according to the learner's proficiency level and the task type. These findings lend further support to the hypothesis that even low level English proficiency learners can communicate and pass comprehensible messages to the interlocutor by resorting to communication strategies (CSs) despite their the linguistic errors committed.

Introduction

Developing second language learners' communicative competence is the ultimate goal of foreign/second language teaching. One essential component of this competence is 'strategic competence'. According to Tarone and Yule (1989), there are two areas related to strategic competence: the learners' skill in transmitting messages to a listener or comprehending

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transmitted messages and their use of communication strategies to compensate for the linguistic problems that arise in the transmission process.

There has been extensive research into communication strategies, but the skill of the learner in transmitting and comprehending messages has received little attention. Tarone and Yule (1989: 103) maintain that "As far as we know, very little attempt has been made to investigate the first area, the learner's overall skills in strategic competence". The research that has been done in this area was carried out with native speakers. For example, Brown and Yule (1983) developed a task-based methodology to evaluate the communicative effectiveness of adolescent English native speakers. Some transactional tasks were developed, such as narrative, picture description and instructions, where the learners were asked to transmit information to a listener who needed the information to complete the task (e.g., Green, 1995, who investigated both areas of strategic competenc).

Review of the Related Literature

Why do people communicate? They communicate in order to pass certain messages to the listener. During the communication process, learners face linguistic problems, so they resort to CSs to solve them. Tarone and Yule (1989:107) state that "in the interest of successful communication, learners seem to attempt to build in redundancy, to send a bigger signal, perhaps to ensure that the basic message does get across". In order to investigate communication success and the effectiveness of CSs in achieving the communicative goals of the learners, some researchers have set up a task for the learner in which the successful transmission of a message is 'criterial' (e.g., Bialystok and Frohlich, 1980, Chen, 1990 and Ellis 1984), but other researchers have not attempted to study whether or not the messages transmitted were successful (e.g.,

Khanji, 1996; Yarmohammadi and Seif, 1992; Poulisse and Schils, 1989). Ellis (1984) conducted a comparative study of L1 and L2 communicative performance where the learners were asked to tell a story depicted in pictures. According to Ellis:

> In order to compare the two groups of avoidance and paraphrase strategies, a number of key 'information - bits' were identified by anticipating what information ought to be included in a notionally 'good' account of the story (1984:41).

Bialystok and Frohlich (1980) examined oral communication strategies for lexical difficulties. To elicit CSs, they used a reconstruction task and picture description task. They examined the communicative effectiveness of the CSs. In the first task, the subjects were asked to describe a picture in French, to a native speaker of French. The communicative effectiveness of the strategies used by the speaker was spontaneously assessed by the reconstructor (native speaker) who provided feedback by selecting either the correct item or an inappropriate object. The information given by each subject was given on separate cards to a native speaker whose job was to rank-order all the cards in terms of their effectiveness in conveying the meaning of a certain item. In the second task the subjects were asked to describe the picture in detail.

Chen's (1990) method for examining the effectiveness of the use of CSs to convey meaning was that each concept was evaluated by the native speaker during the interview and by an independent native speaker who listened to the tapes later. The subjects' communicative effectiveness was assessed by a native speaker according to the following scheme:

5 Effective - identified the words immediately
4 Quite effective – easy to identify the word
3 Moderately effective – hard to identify the word
2 Less effective – very hard to identify the word

1 Not effective – unable to identify the word
(Chen, 1990:161)

Green (1995) measured the learners' success in message transmission by anticipating the information bits that each task might produce. In order to assess the comprehensibility of the subjects' performance, 44 erroneous utterances were chosen from the production of a number of German pupils. 109 native speakers of English were asked to "judge whether the meaning of each item was "clear", "vague" or "distorted" (Green, 1995:109). Then the judgements were reduced to "clear" and "unclear".

Choosing only 44 erroneous utterances (Green, 1995) for analysis is not an ideal procedure to give us a clear picture of whether CSs are successful for transmitting a comprehensible message or not, because a certain utterance which includes a particular CS may be successful on one occasion by one particular learner, but may be unsuccessful on a number of occasions when used either by the same learner or by another learner.

Objectives and Methodology

The major objective of this study is to answer the following question:

1. Are the English majors at Yarmouk University successful in getting their message across to achieve their communicative goals by means of their use of communication strategies (CSs) and despite the linguistic errors committed?
2. Are advanced learners of English better at transmitting comprehensible messages?
3. Can low-level learners transmit comprehensible messages?
4. Does the task being performed have effect on message transmission and comprehension?

Sampling

For this purpose, a sample of 30 English majors (freshmen, sophomores, seniors and graduates) who were studying English at the Department of English at Yarmouk University. They all lived with their parents where the home language is Arabic. At the time of data collection, the subjects had been learning English as a foreign language for between 9 and 12 years. To make our classification of English majors reliable, an adapted TOEFL test of 60 items was used to identify the subjects' proficiency level (low, intermediate and advanced). Ten subjects were randomly selected to represent each proficiency level. The purpose of having three different levels in the sample was to enable us to examine the effect of proficiency on the learners' ability to transmit comprehensible messages.

According to the test results, the subjects were classified into three levels.

Table (1) Levels of English Language Proficiency

Test Score	0 - 20	21 – 40	41 - 60
Proficiency Level	Low	Intermediate	Advanced

Tasks

The following three tasks were given to the sample in order to answer the research questions posited earlier.

1. Object-identification /naming Task

This task consisted of 15 pictures of different objects taken from everyday real life such as: *escalator, lift, pushchair, broom, vacuum cleaner*, etc. These objects were chosen because they represent real-life objects that learners encounter now and then in their houses, in streets, at

shopping centres and at the university (Appendix IV). The subjects were asked to say what the objects were and if it was not possible to name the exact target items, they were asked to describe them in any way they liked to get their message across to the listener.

2. Picture Story-telling Task

This task was a series of six pictures taken from Heaton (1966: 33-34) that tell the story of an accident (Appendix III). The learners were asked to tell the story, imagining that the researcher was their friend. The purpose of using pictures was to restrict the content of the learners' production without affecting the language used to tell the story. This task represents what we do in our daily life, since we generally tell our friends about what has happened to us or to others at work, while driving to work, etc.

3. Role-play Task

A foreigner who has just arrived in London for the first time is having some problems he has to solve. He has met someone who has been in London for a long time and knows it very well. The foreigner wants to solve his problems with the help of the resident. The two speakers were guided with a chart that explained their roles (Appendix I). This task was taken from John Soars and Liz Soars (1996:5-6). The purpose of this task was to see how English majors perform language functions and how successful they are at passing and comprehending messages. The learners were given a chart that showed each partner the speech acts that he was supposed to perform. This was also done to control the content, not the language used. Learner A was given a chart to fill in the messages that received from his partner. The purpose was to measure message comprehension.

Data collection procedure

The main data of this study were taken from cassette-recorded performances of the three tasks: Object-identification/naming task, Picture story-telling task and Role-play task in English L2 and Arabic L1. First, the subjects were asked to perform all the tasks in their native language/Arabic, and then in the target language. This was done to make the subjects feel more relaxed since it is very easy for anyone to perform such tasks in his/her first language. The subjects were audio-recorded in performing the three tasks in a private faculty office in the English Language Department. The procedure adopted in collecting the data for each task was as follows.

Object identification/naming Task

First, the subjects were asked to name the objects in their native language, Arabic. Then, they were asked to look at the photographs one by one and to make it clear in English which object they saw either by naming it, or in any other way, so that any one who would read their description later would be able to identify the objects or name them. During this task the subjects were not given any feedback or help in order to ensure that none of the subjects would be helped more than the other and that our interference would not influence the language produced. The subjects' oral production in both languages was audio-recorded and transcribed for the purpose of the analysis.

Picture Story-telling Task

This task was an oral narrative concerning an accident, in which the subjects were asked to assume the role of a witness telling the story to a friend who did not have any idea about the accident. The author was assumed to be their friend. The subjects' knowledge about the story

was provided by a strip cartoon of six pictures taken from Heaton, 1966. See Appendix III. The steps followed were:

1. They were given three to four minutes to study the pictures and arrange their ideas.

2. The cassette recorder was switched on.

3. Then the subjects were asked to tell the story in English, but they were not given any help. They were asked to begin the story with " Yesterday...."

4. Their oral production in both languages was audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

5. The researcher used key events so that they could be used as criteria against which we measured attempted and unattempted messages because each event is a message. See appendix V. Pictures were useful for the purpose of controlling the key events that we expected our subjects to produce. Besides, pictures are good for stimulating the subjects to produce language. Again, the researcher did not provide verbal feedback while the subjects were telling the story so as not to influence the language produced.

Role-play Task

The subjects were divided into pairs of the same proficiency level so that we could study the CSs used by both learners in asking and answering questions. They were asked to assume the roles of a stranger who has arrived in London and someone who lives in London and knows it very well. The subjects were given a chart that explained their roles. See appendix I. I explained the roles to the subjects once again to make sure that they understood the situation. The learner playing role A was given a chart to fill in the information that he got from his partner during the conversation. The pairs were given a few minutes to prepare themselves for the conversation. The cassette

recorder was switched on. Finally, they were asked to play the roles in English and their oral production in L1 and L2 was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

Findings

The key words, key events and speech acts that were expected to be produced by the subjects were prepared in advance. They were examined by the researcher and two native speakers of English to decide how many key words, key events and speech acts were attempted by the subjects, and whether their transmitted messages were successful and comprehensible or not. If two of us agreed that an attempt was comprehensible, this attempt was considered successful.

1. Object-identification task

In the object-identification task, all pictures were attempted due to the nature of the task. All the picture descriptions were studied to decide whether they were comprehensible or not. The following table shows the results:

Table (2) Number of incomprehensible description instances

Picture No.	Low Level	Intermediate Level	Advanced Level
1	9	4	4
2	9	5	0
3	4	3	0
4	3	1	0
5	4	4	0
6	2	3	0
7	0	0	0
8	4	2	0
9	8	7	1
10	7	5	2
11	3	2	0
12	7	4	0
13	6	6	2
14	5	1	2
15	3	2	0
Total	**75**	**47**	**11**

The table shows that 75 attempts of the low-level learners' (of a total of 150 attempts) were incomprehensible and unsuccessful. In the cases of the intermediate learners, 47 attempts were

incomprehensible. The advanced learners' descriptions were almost all comprehensible, apart from 11 attempts. The data also show that 10 pictures were attempted successfully by all the advanced learners and that their attempts were all comprehensible. All low level and intermediate learners attempted picture 7 successfully.

2. Story-telling task

The following tables show the distribution of unattempted key events in the story-telling task for the three proficiency levels.

Table (3) Distribution of unattempted key events by low-level subjects

No	Key event	Student Number										Total
		1	2	3	4	5	7	7	8	9	10	
1	A boy was riding his bicycle.						√					1
2	A driver was driving very fast.		√									1
3	He honked the horn.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	10
4	He knocked the boy off his bicycle.									√		1
5	The driver did not stop.			√		√		√				3
6	He set off on (went) on his journey.											
7	The car broke down.	√										1
8	The boy rang the bell	√			√	√	√	√	√		√	6
9	He kept on without helping the car driver.											
	Total	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	24

Table (4) Distribution of unattempted key events by intermediate level subjects

No	Key event	Student Number										Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	A boy was riding his bicycle.											
2	A driver was driving very fast.										√	1
3	He honked the horn.	√	√	√	√		√	√	√		√	8
4	He knocked the boy off his bicycle.									√		1
5	The driver did not stop.		√		√	√			√			4
7	He set off on (went) on his journey.											
6	The car broke down.											
8	The boy rang the bell	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	10
9	He kept on without helping the car driver.											
	Total	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	24

Table (5) Distribution of unattempted key events by advanced level subjects

No	Key event	Student Number										Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	A boy was riding his bicycle.											
2	A driver was driving very fast.											
3	He honked the horn.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	10
4	He knocked the boy off his bicycle.									√		1
5	The driver did not stop.	√			√							2
7	He set off on (went) on his journey.											
6	The car broke down.											
8	The boy rang the bell	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	9
9	He kept on without helping the car driver.											
	Total	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	22

The above tables show that low-level and intermediate-level learners registered the same number of key events that were not attempted, a total of 24 cases each. The advanced level learners registered 22 unattempted key events. It is notable that the two key events which were not attempted by most learners were key events 3 and 8, which required deductive skills on the part of the learners, since these two key events were not very clear in the pictures, except for the drawings for the sound of the horn and the bell.

After studying the events attempted, it was found out that few learners transmitted incomprehensible messages. The following table shows the subjects whose attempts were incomprehensible.

Table (6) Incomprehensible attempts in the story-telling task

Student No.	Speech Event No.
Low S3	8
Low S5	7
Low S10	4, 5, 6
Intermediate S5	3
Intermediate S10	7

It was found that the advanced learners' attempts were all successful and comprehensible. Some of the low-level learners' attempts, however, were not successful or comprehensible. They registered 5 incomprehensible messages transmitted by three learners. The intermediate level learners' attempts were all successful and comprehensible except for two cases where two subjects transmitted one incomprehensible message each. The following are examples of the incomprehensible messages transmitted by the learners as decided by the native-speaker judges and the researcher.

1. he did not care ful er about er (5 sec) not careful about him and then he: *zammar, shu mana zamar?* (tr: honked the horn., what is the meaning of "honked the horn."?)

   Key event: The driver honked the horn.

2. he's [lʌk] or see he's see the someone is er ,...,...,..., in the car e:r the car is em ..., have some ,...,..., ((unintel)), ok?

   Key event: The car broke down.

3. em suddenly we are (6 sec) *shu maana sadam* (tr : what is the meaning of knock or hit) ((laugh)) the car e:r the car about the bicycle er ,..,...,...,..., ((laugh))

   Key event: The driver knocked the boy off his bicycle.

1. the: car e:r ..., wek quickly about the street *ow* (tr: and)..., didn't [nau] ,...,..., ((sigh)) [ʌndɚsted] about the bo:y how to: how to the e:r how to the help the boy. e:r the man the man of the ride of car we a:re e:r quickly about the street ..., *ow* (tr: and)

   Key event: The driver did not stop to help.

5. suddenly he saw..., e:r the owner of the cars ,...,...,..., e:r in this time the ca(r) the owner of the car wound wounded he wounded the: his car

Key event: The car broke down.

It was sometimes difficult to decide whether the attempt matched the key event or not. The following is an example of a learner's interpreting the picture in his own way.

when the car come beside the er the boy with the bicycle the boy confused was confused and e:r he: flow in e:r he flow e:r and the car, ..., take it way

This example was interpreted by the native speaker judges as "The boy was confused and he fell down". What was shown in the picture was that the driver knocked the boy off his bicycle. This is a case where it was difficult to tell whether the key event had been attempted or not. I decided that the key events had been attempted in such examples. This attempt was therefore considered unsuccessful, since although he passed on a message, that message was incorrect and misleading. The majority of messages transmitted by the English majors were judged to be comprehensible and successful. The translation of the Arabic utterances was taken out when the scripts were given to the native speaker judges so as not to affect their judgement. Despite the use of different CSs (i.e. circumlocution and literal translation, approximation), the following two examples were judged to be comprehensible and successful.

1. and the boy ,...,...,will be continuous er ,...,..., he is road .., after the: driver and he: is looking to him ,..,..., er and er calling with he is bicycle *{pum, pum}* ((a sound used in colloquial Arabic to refer to the sound of the "horn"))
2. there is the driver e:r fixed my car because e:r ,...,e:r it er damaged er er..., so he er ..., don't interest er in the driver

The first example was interpreted by the two native speaker judges as: "The boy went on his trip without helping the driver and he rang his bell." The second example was interpreted as " the driver was trying to fix his car because it broke down.". Their interpretations matched the key events in the story-telling task.

3. Role-play task

In the role-play task, speech acts were decided in advance (Appendix VI) and given in a chart to the subjects. It was found that two subjects did not attempt the question about the bank working hours and that consequently there was no response.

One learner (LS9) asked a question about accommodation, and his respondent, LS10, said everything about the accommodation except for its name. This could be because the learner did not know, due to his low level of proficiency, which was apparent, that "Student Hostel" is a type of accommodation. Another mistake that the same learner made was in communicating the cost of the accommodation, when he read the numbers in the wrong way. This also affected the comprehension of his partner who was supposed to fill in the chart about the cost. He wrote "thirty thirty pounds", but it was thirty-three pounds. It seems that the second partner did not resort to confirmation checks because of his own weakness.

LS9: er ok. can you tell me: about it cost?
LS10: cost? cost about what?
LS9: about accommodation, how e:r?
LS10: how much it cost?
LS9: yes. thirty thirty a [baund] e:r a week.

Another learner (LS7) made a similar mistake, saying" thirty thirty pound" and it was written by his partner (LS8) in the chart as "30 30 a week". This is also evidence of the learners' weakness.

Sometimes it was difficult to decide whether a certain speech act was comprehensible or not. For example, in asking about a newspaper from the foreigner's country, 5 learners (2 low-level, 2

intermediate and 1 advanced) were content with asking questions that did not specify which type of newspaper, as follows:

1. em please, I would like er to: buy er em a newspaper from your country but I don't know er e:r where e:r
2. okay. I would like to buy a newspaper. can you help me e:r e:r to show the place can I buy? I don't know the place of this. if you know the [bleis] to buy. I can buy the newspaper in any place or?
3. yeah. okay. e:m could you please tell me about e:r newspapers here if they are available near here?

What the subjects were required to do was to ask about where to find a place that sold newspapers from their native country, not British newspapers. But these attempts could have been successful in negotiating meaning and leading to comprehension.

In order to decide whether the learners playing role B were good at comprehension, two native speaker judges and the researcher studied the charts filled in by each learner. It was found that the low-level subjects registered a total of 8 incorrect pieces of information. That is, LS5 registered 4 incorrect pieces of information, LS7 registered one case and LS9 registered 3 incorrect pieces of information on the chart. Only one learner from the intermediate level (IS1) registered 1 incorrect piece of information on the chart. The advanced learners did not register any incorrect information. This means that they comprehended all the messages transmitted to them. As has been noted, the lower the language proficiency level of the subject, the higher the possibility of producing incomprehensible messages or not comprehending transmitted ones. The results of this analysis show that all the subjects were good at comprehension, especially the

advanced subjects, despite resorting to communication strategies in their production. We can conclude also that advanced subjects were more successful at the tasks than low-level subjects.

Discussion

There was a correlation between success in message transmission and the subjects' proficiency level. The higher the level, the more the comprehensible and successful the messages will be. For example, in the role-play task, it was found that the advanced learners' attempts were all successful and comprehensible, but that some of the low-level learners' attempts were not comprehensible and therefore unsuccessful. The intermediate level learners' attempts were all successful and comprehensible except for two cases.

In the object-identification task, all the pictures were attempted due to the nature of the task. All the descriptions were studied to decide whether they were comprehensible or not. It was found that about 50% of low-level learners' attempts were not comprehensible and therefore unsuccessful (75 out of 150 attempts). With regard to the intermediate learners, 47 attempts (of 150) were incomprehensible, accounting for 31%. The advanced learners' descriptions were almost all comprehensible, except for 11 attempts.

In the role-play task, speech acts were decided in advance and given on a chart to the subjects. It was found that two subjects did not attempt the question about the bank working hours and that consequently there was no response.

Sometimes, success or failure of message transmission is related to the type of strategy used. For example, language switch proved to be an unsuccessful strategy when heard by the native

speakers of the target language. Sometimes it depends on which subjects used which strategy. For example, circumlocution strategy was judged for one learner as successful and for another as unsuccessful.

> It's line use in e:r ,..., e:r used to em,...,...,..., to: er ..., general people
>
> em,...,..., signs which are put under or in the street,...,..., it has ..., yellow colour
>
> e:r ...,...,...,..., a pacing er pacing e:r e:r for e:r,...,..., used for e:r ((cough)) ..., ...,...,white lines in the street in e:r in horizontal e:r er se (tting) e:r setting or vertical or horizontal *bilardh* (tr. Horizontal) e:r used for e:r er pacing the people of through the street.

The first two examples were considered unsuccessful and incomprehensible. But the last one was considered to be successful and comprehensible. So it cannot simply be said that a certain type of strategy was successful in making the transmitted message comprehensible and successful. This was also related to the learners' proficiency level and their available linguistic resources.

These findings support Bialystok and Frohlich (1980), who found that language switch was the least successful strategy used by their subjects. Another finding was that a strategy was found to be the least effective and the most effective, depending on the item transmitted and the subjects' proficiency level. This also supports Chen (1990) who found that repetition was the least effective strategy because it did not add any new information. Chen also found that CSs used by high-proficiency learners were more effective than those used by low-proficiency learners.

Conclusion and Implications

This study has had the following five major conclusions:

1. English language majors at Yarmouk University make use of communication strategies, such as literal translation, circumlocution, code-switching and avoidance to help them pass comprehensible messages to the listeners.

2. Even weak learners were good at transmitting comprehensible messages due to their use of communication strategies.

3. There is a relationship between the task being performed and message comprehension. For example, in the picture identification task, there were 133 instances of incomprehensible messages whereas there were 7 cases in the story-telling task and about 4 cases in the role-play task. Because the picture-identification task requires difficult vocabulary, many of the transmitted messages were incomprehensible.

4. There is a relationship between the learners' proficiency level and message comprehension. For example, low-level learners in the object identification task registered 75 incomprehensible cases, whereas intermediate learners 47 cases and the advanced 11 cases. Most of the registered unsuccessful attempts were produced by low-level subjects, 50% whose attempts were a failure.

5. This study suggests that about 90 percent of the messages transmitted can be comprehensible and successful because of the learners' use of CSs. The use of CSs is a means of solving communication problems with the aim of passing comprehensible messages to the interlocutor. About 97 per cent of transmitted messages in the role-play and story-telling tasks were judged as comprehensible and successful as a result of the use of CSs, but this depended on the

learners' proficiency level. This means that the use of communication strategies helped the subjects to communicate their messages effectively and successfully. About 73 per cent of the subjects' descriptions in the object-identification task were judged as comprehensible and successful.

The teachers' role is then to orient the learners and focus their attention on the strategies that help learners to communicate. This can be done by explaining the nature and types of CSs to their learners and illustrating them with examples. Students should also be encouraged to take risks and to use CSs. This means that learners should use all their available resources to communicate language resources without being afraid of making errors. This conscious-raising is very important as it leads to learning and as CSs are part of language use. The use of a communication strategy also is not an indication of communication failure; on the contrary, it can be very successful in compensating for the lack of linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, students can be asked to perform communicative tasks and have it video-taped to be viewed later on to see their performance.

As the results of our research showed that even weak learners were good at transmitting comprehensible and successful messages, which is probably a result of the use of communication strategies, university students and school learners should, therefore, be aware of these strategies and understand their value. Weak learners will like the idea as it makes things easier for them and helps them to solve their communication problems.

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Appendix I

Role - Play Task

Role (A)

You have just arrived in London for the first time.

You have come for a holiday and to learn English. London seems a little strange and you need to ask for help.

These are some of your problems:

You may ask for more information about the address, telephone, etc.

1. You need to change some traveller's cheques, but you don't know where to find a bank, or what time the banks open and close.
2. You need to buy some stamps and postcards.
3. You would like to buy a newspaper from your country.
4. You want to find a good English language school.
5. You want to ask about accommodation and how much it costs.

You meet someone who lives in London and who seems friendly, so you ask for information.
Prepare what you are going to say.

Role (B)

You live in London and know it quite well. You meet a foreigner who has just arrived, and who seems to have some problems.

Look at the information here and try to help him \ her.

Barclays Bank

Opening hours

Mon – Fri 9:30 –3:30

Closed all day Saturday

RACHMAN'S INTERNATIONAL

NEWSAGENTS

For all newspapers. If we haven't got it, we'll get it. **Also cigarettes, confectionery, gift shop souvenirs.**

174 **Bank Street** opposite the police station

HIGH STREET POST OFFICE

Opening hours

Mon.	9. 00 – 5.30
Tues.	9. 00 – 5.30
Wed.	9.00 – 1.00

International School

Do you want to learn English from experts?
Come to
106 Dover Street, **W 1** for tuition, social programme, and accommodation or phone 491 2596

Student Hostel

We have good, cheap rooms for students. Single, double, share from £33 a week. Come and see us at **278 Tottenham Court Road** anytime day or night.
Tel: 325 6789

Appendix II

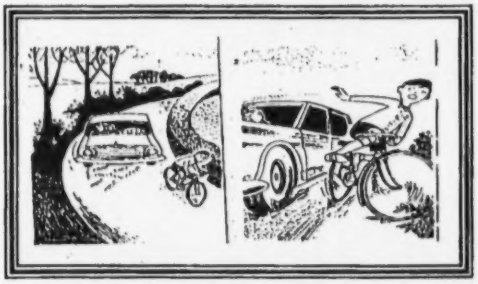
Role (A) Student's Sheet

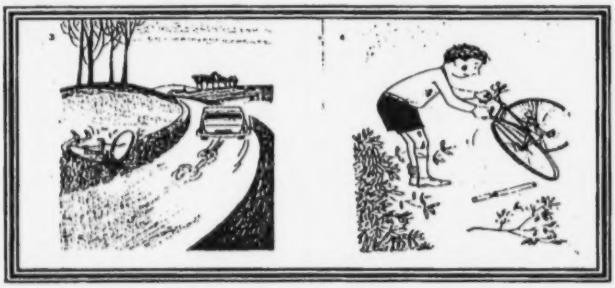
Please fill in the following chart during the conversation.

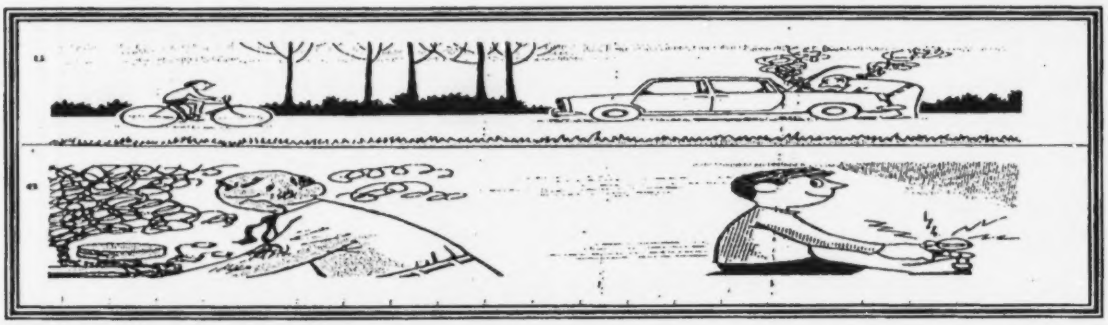
Name of the Bank	
The Bank's Opening and Closing Hours	
Name of the Post Office	
Name of the Newspaper Agency	
Name of the School	
Name of the Accommodation	
Cost of Accommodation Per Week	

Appendix III

Picture Story-Telling Task







Appendix IV

Object-identification Task (Key words)

Picture No.	
1.	Vending Machine
2.	Detergents
3.	Pushchair
4.	Hoover/ Vacuum Cleaner
5.	Broom
6.	Fire Extinguisher
7.	Telephone booth / call box/ Public phone /Public telephone
8.	Lift / elevator
9.	Escalator
10.	Baby Walker
11.	Cutlery
12.	Zebra Crossing/ Pedestrian crossing
13.	Chandeliers
14.	Speedometer
15.	Thermometer

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Appendix V

List of Key and Subsidiary events in the Story- telling task

A. Key Events

1. A boy/a cyclist was riding his bicycle.
2. A car driver was driving very fast.
3. He honked the horn.
4. He knocked the boy off his bicycle.
5. The car driver did not stop.
6. He set off on (continued) his journey.
7. Then the driver's car broke down.
8. The boy rang his bell
9. He kept straight on without helping the car driver.

B. Subsidiary Events

1. The road was narrow.
2. The boy fell down.
3. The boy was unhurt.
4. The boy fixed his bike.

Appendix VI

List of Speech Acts in the Role-play Task

Student A

1- Inquiring about where to change cheques.
2- Inquiring about time when banks open and close.
3- Inquiring about where to find stamps.
4- Inquiring about how to get a newspaper from his country.
5- Inquiring about an appropriate school for him to learn English.
6- Inquiring about accommodation.
7- Inquiring about the cost of accommodation.

Student B

1- Information about the bank: name.
2- Information about working hours of the bank.
3- Information about where to find stamps and post cards.
4- Information about Rachman's International Newsagents.
5- Information about an appropriate school
6- Information about accommodation.
7- Information about the cost per week.

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